

Commission on Affordable Housing and Health Facility Needs for Seniors in the 21st Century and to make technical corrections to the law governing the Commission.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 1850

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Senior Housing Commission Extension Act of 2001".

SEC. 2. EXTENSION OF SENIORS HOUSING AND HEALTH FACILITY NEEDS COMMISSION AND TECHNICAL CORRECTIONS.

Section 525 of the Departments of Veterans Affairs and Housing and Urban Development, and Independent Agencies Appropriations Act, 2000 (42 U.S.C. 12701 note) is amended—

(1) in subsection (d)(4), by striking "reimbursable" and inserting "non-reimbursable";

(2) in the first sentence of subsection (f)—
(A) by striking "Banking and"; and

(B) by striking "December 31, 2001" and inserting "December 31, 2002"; and

(3) in subsection (g), by striking "June 30, 2002" and inserting "March 31, 2003".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. GREEN) and the gentlewoman from Indiana (Ms. CARSON) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. GREEN).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. GREEN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 1850.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Wisconsin?

There was no objection.

Mr. GREEN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

The purpose of H.R. 1850, the Senior Housing Commission Extension Act, is to extend for 1 year the Commission on Affordable Housing and Health Care Facility Needs of Senior Citizens. In 1999, Congress created this Commission to develop a comprehensive strategy for dealing with the growing needs associated with senior housing.

This extension is necessary because the appointment of commission members was delayed for more than 1 year after the passage on October 20, 1999, with commission member appointments not occurring until January 2, 2001. Given that more than 1 year passed before commission co-chairpersons, members and a staff could be appointed, the Commission requested an extension of the report deadline from December 31, 2001, to March 30, 2003.

This legislation merely makes technical corrections to allow the Commission to do the job that Congress originally intended. H.R. 1850 extends the dates authorizing the Commission's reporting date, termination date and au-

thority to use agency employees on a non-reimbursable basis. The Congressional Budget Office estimates that this bill will require no additional spending.

This country is facing a serious housing crisis for low and moderate income families and individuals. In no other segment of our population is this crisis more evident than in our senior's population. According to the Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, in July 1999 there were more than 35.5 million Americans over 65 years of age, and the Bureau projects that by the year 2075, more than 55.7 million, or one in eight, Americans will be over 65 years in age.

HUD statistics indicate that only one-third of the low income senior citizens in need of affordable housing actually receives assistance. Appropriate senior housing is only part of the problem. Along with the decent housing, seniors need supportive services. Over the years, non-profits and faith-based organizations have worked with HUD to develop creative ways to meet the needs of this vulnerable group, but as our population continues to age, we must seek new ways to address this growing problem.

The commission is charged with developing a comprehensive strategy to address the issues that are inherent to America's aging population by reviewing existing programs and exploring new ideas and partnerships. H.R. 1850 will provide the Commission with the time that Congress originally intended that it have to complete this task.

I urge my colleagues' support and I urge adoption of this measure.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. CARSON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume. I think the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. GREEN) has done a yeoman's job in detailing the needs of this legislation.

Let me reinforce a part of his message, and that is, the dire need for affordable, decent, safe housing for our aging population. Since I am probably one of them, this is probably a conflict of interest as I speak.

I rise in support of this bipartisan legislation, which extends the life of the "Commission on Affordable Housing and Health Facility Needs for Seniors in the 21st Century," commonly referred to as the Seniors Commission.

The Seniors Commission was established on a bipartisan basis in the last Congress. It is charged with studying and proposing recommendations dealing with the challenges of developing aging in place strategies for the housing and health care needs of our Nation's senior citizens.

Originally, the commission was charged with issuing a report by December 31 of this year, and with wrapping up all business by June 30 of next year. However, more than a year passed after the bill's enactment before commissioners were actually named. This makes meeting the original statutory deadlines unre-

alistic. Without a change in deadlines, the commission simply cannot do a thorough job of completing the tasks they are charged with.

Therefore, this legislation provides a 1 year extension on the report deadline, to December 31 of next year, and a 9-month extension on the commission's termination, to March 31 of 2003.

In addition, the bill authorizes the detailing of Federal personnel to the commission on nonreimbursable basis. Currently, such detailing can only be done on a reimbursable basis.

This is a noncontroversial bill, and I urge its adoption.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage all my colleagues to give their enthusiastic support in extending the life of the commission.

Mr. OXLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 1850—the "Senior Housing Commission Extension Act of 2001."

The Committee voted unanimously to support this legislation on June 27, 2001 and reported [House Report 107-147] the bill to the House on July 19, 2001. This legislation makes certain technical corrections to legislation enacted in October 1999 creating the Commission on Affordable Housing and Health Care Facility Needs in the 21st Century. As I understand, it took one year longer than anticipated for Congress to appoint Commission members. As a result, we are extending the Commission's reporting deadline and termination date by one year. We also clarify the Commission's authority to use agency employees as details on a non-reimbursable basis.

As many of you know, our population is aging, particularly for low- and moderate-income families and individuals. According to the Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, in July 1999 there were more than 35.5 million Americans over 65 years of age, and the Bureau projects that by the year 2075, more than 55.7 million, or one in eight Americans, will be over 65 years of age.

These are purely technical corrections worked-out between the majority and minority staffs along with the Commission's Executive Director—Gerard Holder—that will empower the Commission to provide the type of report and recommendations necessary to assist Congress in addressing elderly housing issues.

Mr. Speaker, I urge passage of this legislation.

Mr. GREEN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. CARSON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. GREEN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1850.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.